

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of the Claims:**

1. (presently amended) A system, comprising:
  - a first logic unit to provide a list of service providers via an Internet connection, indicating a real-time availability and a rate of each service provider of the service providers;
  - a second logic unit to receive from a user a selection of a service provider from the list of service providers;
  - a third logic unit to attempt to establish a real-time communications connection to the service provider; and
  - a fourth logic unit to search a database of alternate service providers, in response to a failed attempt to connect the selected service provider and the user, for an alternate service provider based on a pre-established set of criteria and to offer the user an option of connecting with the alternate service provider, wherein the set of criteria comprises on or more of the alternate service provider having a rate within a predetermined range of the selected service provider, subject matter, and ~~is to include~~ a reliability factor comprising a ratio of successful connections between the alternate service provider and previous users to total attempts between the alternate service provider and previous users.
2. (canceled)
3. (presently amended) The system of claim 1, wherein, in response to a connection established between the selected service provider and the user, the fourth logic unit presents the alternate service provider after communication is completed with the service provider.

4. (original) The system of claim 1, wherein the service provider is an information provider.
5. (previously presented) The system of claim 4, wherein information of the information provider is provided as a recorded transmission.
6. (previously presented) The system of claim 4, wherein information of the information provider is provided as a communication with a live person.
7. (previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein the selection is received over a telephone connection.
8. (previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein the selection is received over the Internet connection.
9. (canceled) ~~The system of claim 1, wherein the pre-established set of criteria includes the rate of the selected service provider.~~
10. (canceled)
11. (canceled)
12. (canceled)
13. (previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein a system administrator can establish the set of criteria.
14. (canceled)

15. (canceled)

16. (canceled)

17. (presently amended) A system for establishing a real-time communication connection between two parties, the system comprising:

a communications interface; and

a controller computer linked with the communications interface, the controller computer having:

a first logic unit to provide a list of service providers over an Internet connection, indicating a real-time availability and a rate of each service provider of the service providers;

a second logic unit to receive from a user a selection of a service provider from the list of service providers;

a third logic unit to attempt to establish a real-time communications connection to the service provider; and

a fourth logic unit to search a database of alternate service providers, in response to a failed attempt to connect the selected service provider and the user, for an alternate service provider based on a pre-established set of criteria and to offer the user an option of connecting with the alternate service provider, wherein the set of criteria comprises on or more of the alternate service provider having a rate within a predetermined range of the selected service provider, subject matter, and a reliability factor comprising a ratio of successful connections between the alternate service provider and previous users to total attempts between the alternate service provider and previous users.  
~~a fourth logic unit to search a database of alternate service providers for an alternate service provider based on a pre-established set of criteria and to offer the user an option of connecting with the alternate service provider, wherein the set of criteria is to include a reliability factor.~~

18. (previously presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the third logic unit attempts to establish a real-time communications connection between the user and the alternate service provider.
19. (previously presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the real-time communications connection is a telephone connection.
20. (previously presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the real-time communications connection is the Internet connection.
21. (original) The system of claim 17, wherein the first logic unit provides the list of providers to the user via a web page.
22. (previously presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the second logic unit receives the user's selection via a web page.
23. (previously presented) The system of claim 17, wherein the third logic unit provides a list of the alternate service providers to the user via a web page.
24. (original) The system of claim 17, wherein the service provider is an information provider.
25. (previously presented) The system of claim 24, wherein the information provider's information is provided as a recorded transmission.
26. (previously presented) The system of claim 24, wherein the information provider's information is provided as a communication with a live person.
27. (canceled)

28. (canceled)

29. (canceled)

30. (canceled)

31. (canceled)

32. (previously presented) The system of claim 17, wherein a system administrator can establish the set of criteria.

33. (original) The system of claim 17, wherein a user establishes the set of criteria.

34. (presently amended) The system of claim 17, wherein, in response to a connection established between the selected service provider and the user, the fourth logic unit presents the alternate service provider after communication is completed with the service provider, ~~wherein the fourth logic unit offers an option to connect the user to the alternate service provider after communication has ceased with the service provider.~~

35. (canceled)

36. (canceled)

37. (presently amended) A method comprising:  
    sending a user a list of service providers via an Internet connection, indicating a real-time availability and a rate of each service provider on the list;  
    receiving from the user a selection of a service provider on the list;  
    attempting to establish real-time communications between the user and the service provider; and

offering the user an option to connect to an alternate service provider pre-selected by the service provider, including searching a database of alternate service providers, in response to a failed attempt to connect the selected service provider and the user, for an alternate service provider based on a pre-established set of criteria comprising on or more of the alternate service provider having a rate within a predetermined range of the selected service provider, subject matter, and a reliability factor comprising a ratio of successful connections between the alternate service provider and previous users to total attempts between the alternate service provider and previous users.

38. (canceled)

39. (canceled)

40. (previously presented) The method of claim 37, wherein the communications established between the service provider and the user is a telephone connection.

41. (previously presented) The method of claim 37, wherein the communications established between the service provider and the user is the Internet connection.

42. (canceled)

43. (presently amended) The method of claim 37, in response to a connection established between the selected service provider and the user, providing the ~~wherein the~~ option to connect to the alternate service provider ~~is sent~~ after the communications between the user and the service provider ends.

44. (original) The method of claim 37, wherein the service provider is an information provider.

45. (previously presented) The method of claim 44, wherein information of the information provider is provided as a recorded transmission.
46. (previously presented) The method of claim 44, wherein information of the information provider is provided as a communication with a live person.
47. (canceled)
48. (canceled)
49. (presently amended) The method of claim 3748, wherein the user can determine the range.
50. (presently amended) The method of claim 3748, wherein a system administrator can determine the range.
51. (canceled)
52. (canceled)
53. (previously presented) The method of claim 37, wherein a system administrator can establish the criteria by which a match is determined.
54. (previously presented) The method of claim 37, wherein the user can establish the criteria by which a match is determined.
55. (canceled)
56. (canceled)

57. (presently amended) A method of rerouting a user from a selected service provider to an alternate service provider, the method comprising:

providing access to a database of alternate service providers when a selected provider cannot be reached;

searching a database of alternate service providers, in response to a failed attempt to connect the selected service provider and the user, for an alternate service provider based on a pre-established set of criteria comprising on or more of the alternate service provider having a rate within a predetermined range of the selected service provider, subject matter, and a reliability factor comprising a ratio of successful connections between the alternate service provider and previous users to total attempts between the alternate service provider and previous users; searching the database for an alternate service provider that matches the selected service provider based on a pre-established set of criteria wherein the criteria includes a reliability factor; and

providing a user with a list of alternate service providers via an Internet connection, the list to indicate a real-time availability ~~and a rate~~ of each alternate service provider on the list.-

58. (previously presented) The method of claim 57, wherein the selected service provider is an information provider.

59. (previously presented) The method of claim 58, wherein information of the information provider is provided as a recorded transmission.

60. (previously presented) The method of claim 58, wherein information of the information provider is provided as a communication with a live person.

61. (previously presented) The method of claim 57, wherein the user can select an alternate service provider from the list and be connected to the alternate service provider.



62. (original) The method of claim 57, wherein the selected service provider receives a pre-established percentage of any commission paid to the alternate service provider.

63. (previously presented) The method of claim 57, wherein the selected service provider is given an option to provide access to the database when the selected service provider creates an initial listing.

64. (previously presented) The method of claim 63, wherein the option defaults to allow access to the database.

65. (previously presented) The method of claim 57, wherein the selected service provider is notified of a missed connection with the user.

66. (presently amended) The method of claim 65, wherein the notice comes in ~~the~~ a form of an e-mail.

67. (canceled)

68. (canceled)

69. (previously presented) The method of claim 57, wherein the user can determine the predetermined range.

70. (previously presented) The method of claim 57, wherein a system administrator can determine the predetermined range.

71. (canceled)

72. (previously presented) The method of claim 57, wherein a system administrator can establish the criteria by which a match is determined.

73. (previously presented) The method of claim 57, wherein the user can establish the criteria by which a match is determined.

74. (canceled)

75. (canceled)

76. (canceled)

77. (presently amended) A machine-readable storage medium tangibly embodying a sequence of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method comprising:

sending a user a list of service providers via an Internet connection, indicating a real-time availability and rate of each service provided on the list;

receiving from the user a selection of a service provider;

attempting to establish real-time communications between the user and the selected service provider; and

offering the user an option to connect to an alternate service provider pre-selected by the service provider, including searching a database of alternate service providers, in response to a failed attempt to connect the selected service provider and the user, for an alternate service provider based on a pre-established set of criteria comprising on or more of the alternate service provider having a rate within a predetermined range of the selected service provider, subject matter, and a reliability factor comprising a ratio of successful connections between the alternate service provider and previous users to total attempts between the alternate service provider and previous users.-

78. (canceled)

79. (canceled)

80. (previously presented) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 77, wherein the communication established between the service provider and the user is a telephone connection.

81. (previously presented) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 77, wherein the communication established between the service provider and the user is an Internet connection.

82. (canceled)

83. (presently amended) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 77, wherein the option to connect to the alternate service provider is sent after the communications ends between the user and the selected service provider ~~ends~~.

84. (previously presented) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 77, wherein the selected service provider is an information provider.

85. (presently amended) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 84, wherein ~~the~~ information of the information provider is provided as a recorded transmission.

86. (presently amended) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 84, wherein ~~the~~ information of the information provider is provided as a communication with a live person.

87. (canceled)

88. (canceled)

89. (presently amended) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 7788, wherein the user can determines the range.
90. (presently amended) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 7788, wherein a system administrator can determines the range.
91. (canceled)
92. (canceled)
93. (previously presented) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 77, wherein a system administrator establish the criteria by which a match is determined.
94. (previously presented) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 77, wherein the user can establish the criteria by which a match is determined.
95. (canceled)
96. (canceled)
97. (presently amended) A system for establishing a real-time communication connection between two parties, the system comprising:  
a communications interface; and  
a controller computer linked with the communications interface, the controller computer having:  
a first logic unit to provide a list of service providers via an Internet connection, the list to indicate a real-time availability and rate of each of the service providers;  
a second logic unit to receive from a user a selection of a service provider from the list of service providers;